

Hobbies

When a little folding money can be worth a tidy sum

By Roger Boye

Today's column answers questions from Chicago Tribune readers.

Q—I have what has to be the mother of all misprinted \$10 bills. The lower right-hand corner of the front side is blank. The lower left-side corner of the back side is extended beyond the margin and includes the missing part of the front-side design. The bill is fresh from the printers. Do you think I've got something here? D.D., Janesville, Wis.

A—Uncirculated specimens of

bills with such "butterfly folds" often retail in the \$30 to \$70 range, depending on the size of the affected area. The oddity was created when some paper folded as your bill was made. Government printers are supposed to identify and destroy freaks, but a few escape detection and are released to the banking system.

Q—For years we've owned a 1969 Lincoln-Kennedy penny that's attached to a card saying, "this unusual commemorative piece is truly a collector's item." The card describes 23 "as-

tonishing coincidences," such as the fact both presidents were slain on Friday in the presence of their wives. Has my item appreciated in price? F.B., Wood Dale

A—No. A private company stamped the profile of Kennedy's head into your Lincoln cent after the coin left the United States Mint. An almost unlimited quantity of such items could have been made. As such, they have little value on the hobby market.

Q—I've been told that 1943 silver-colored Lincoln pennies are worth big money. Where can I

sell the two such coins I own? J.N., Chicago

A—You have your dates confused. In the war year of 1943, Uncle Sam made 1.1 billion Lincoln cents out of zinc-plated steel, saving copper for the war effort. Today, those coins retail for less than 25 cents each unless they are in uncirculated condition or nearly so.

The traditional copper-based cent returned in 1944, but the government apparently produced a handful of coins out of zinc and steel, using slugs left from 1943. Two months ago, one such coin in "mint state condition" sold at auction for \$5,775.

Q—How could I get information about 1992 coin sets from Canada and Great Britain? P.J.,

Rockford

A—Write to the Royal Canadian Mint, P.O. Box 457, Station A, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8V5, and to the British Royal Mint, P.O. Box 2570, Woodside, N.Y. 11377.

Q—Twelve years ago, I bought two silver dollars from a dealer who promised a life-time return privilege. I've been told the coins are "over graded" and I want to get my money back. But his store is gone. What do I do now? R.E., Chicago

A—You're stuck with the merchandise unless you can get an updated address through the American Numismatic Association or other organization. Even then, your chances of a refund are nil.